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**Counties Launch “Get Ready Hawai‘i” Pilot Campaign to Improve Disaster Preparedness
*Survey Reveals Complacency Is A Factor***

(Honolulu, Hawai‘i—May 2, 2012)—Today is a perfect day to prepare—for the unexpected. That describes the theme of a pilot education campaign to encourage Hawai‘i residents to fully prepare for large-scale emergencies and disasters, before they happen. The pilot launches Wednesday, May 2, following Tsunami Preparedness Month in April.

Hawai‘i’s four county mayors, each with emergency management stories to tell, are rallying to kick off and support the campaign. They agree that the price of an unprepared Hawaii is too high.

Project research confirms that Hawai‘i residents are no strangers to disaster. Eighty-nine percent of residents say they have experienced a large-scale disaster, but only 25 percent say they are very prepared. Eighty-two percent of residents also believe that government and community organizations are primarily responsible for their preparedness. Many residents said they were too busy or that they never thought about preparing. Others even admitted to being lazy or resigned to wait until the need arises.

“Many people are not as prepared as they think are. Many others would wait until it is too late to prepare. We’ve seen lines at gas stations and grocery stores when storms head our way,” said Mayor Peter Carlisle, “The goal of this campaign is to determine the best ways to get individuals, families and businesses ready for disasters—before they come. “We need to educate our community about what it means to be fully prepared: emergency kits that are complete and sufficient for seven days; a plan that describes what each family member or employee can do during an emergency; and staying informed about emergency situations, including knowing evacuation routes and shelter locations.”

Counties, under the leadership of their emergency management programs, work together every day to help residents plan and prepare for catastrophic events such as natural disasters and human-caused disasters, including terrorism. The City and County of Honolulu is leading this project for the counties under the FEMA Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program. O‘ahu is the site for the pilot campaign to determine what messages and methods of communication are most likely to improve disaster preparedness.

“Hawai‘i has island-specific disaster preparedness challenges affected by a combination of economic, language and cultural factors. But the state is also blessed with committed organizations that serve vulnerable populations and help in outreach,” said Melvin N. Kaku, Honolulu’s Director of Emergency Management. “There is no better time than now to prepare.”

The campaign includes public service announcements that include a TV spot, several radio spots, print advertising, environmental advertising, point-of-purchase displays at retail locations and a significant online/social media presence.

The pilot campaign is supported by significant in-kind donations from media outlets and retailers, and is supported by Retail Merchants of Hawai‘i. Throughout the month of May, retailers will promote disaster preparedness through in-store education and product displays that highlight both disaster preparedness supplies and information about what it means to be fully prepared.

For more information about the pilot campaign, or to download a complete media kit, visit www.GetReadyHawaii.org.

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